

Minutes of the Fall 2013 VAR Meeting

SEPTEMBER 28, 2013

Greenbrier Festival Grounds, Williamsburg, WV

Meeting was called to order at 9:07

Reports

The Secretary - Carol Tiderman

A motion was made by New River Grotto to accept the minutes as presented. Front Royal Grotto seconded. Motion passed.

The Treasurer - John Fox

The status of the treasury was presented & distributed. There was a discussion regarding host groups not paying the VAR fee.

The Vice Chair - Judy Fisher

No report

The Chairman - Craig Hindman

No report

Conservation CO-Chair - Meredith Hall Weberg

A different epoxy is need for formation repair in Fountain Cave.

VAR Outstanding Service Award - Meredith Hall Weberg

No nominations fitting the criteria were received

Landowner Recognition Awards - Janet Tinkan

On September 14 Carroll Bassett of the West Virginia Cave Conservancy presented Alex Lewis of Frankford, WV with the VAR Land Owner Recognition Award. Mr Lewis is the owner of Savannah Cave in Greenbrier WV. Details of the nomination and presentation will be in the next issue of Region Record.

There are some grottoes that have yet to nominate a deserving landowner for this award. Put this on your next meeting agenda and make it a priority....come on get off your asses and do it! If not for the gracious landowners we would not have access to these underground treasures that allow us escape from our otherwise mundane lives. A simple online form, a simple click of the mouse...type, type, type, send. That's all it takes..

Landowner Legal Support Committee - Bob Hoke

No new is good news.

Region Record - Jessica Reep & Kyle Mills

Send articles and pictures - Deadline for next issue December 15th

VAR List Server - Walt Pirie

No report

VAR Web site - Jim McConkey

Check your grotto's listings for correct contact information, and forward changed to Jim (webmaster@varegion.org).

This does not necessarily need to be announced publicly, but let the officers know that we will be making changes to how the e-mail aliases work (chair@, etc.) Right now, our ISP host has to make changes to our aliases for historic reasons, and we are going to switch it so the aliases are under my control, which will make it much quicker and easier to update if anyone ever gets replaced in an election, or we get new committee chairs, etc. I will send all the aliases a test e-mail after the change happens.

Cave Bucks - JC Fisher

Still works. It's easy. For more information contact JC. Send the funds in, don't hold onto them.

VSS - Rick Lambert

No report One more cave than WV

WVASS –

Brian Maste wrote the data base. There are 4500 caves. Caves and springs are not split. Digs are important. There have been two meetings with the Forest Service. Approximately 25 people were present. Sites were discussed Tucker County, Cave Mountain, Cave Hollow/Arbogast, Shavers Mountain. The FS is willing to listen. Nothing is going to happen in a hurry Almost 100% of their data comes from cavers

Dave West & Dave Riggs represent the cavers with the Forest Service

Bowden Cave has been very trashed

WVCC - Dave Socky

Tricolor bats found with little brown bats get wiped out, but if there are no little browns the Tri color bats do well.

SCCI – Walt Pirie

No report

Grand Caverns/Cave Hill - Jim McConkey

This November marks the end of the 10th full year of the VAR's Grand Caverns Survey! Many thanks to Park Liaison Carol Tideman, present Project Coordinator Jim McConkey, past Project Coordinator Josh Rubinstein, and the dozens and dozens of volunteers for a great decade of caving and research!!! What started as simple request for a new map for the cave's 2006 bicentennial has taken on a life of its own. We have quadrupled the known size of Grand Caverns to just shy of 4 miles and discovered amazing new passage, re-discovered the long-forgotten original entrance to Fountain Cave, documented hundreds of signatures, restarted a dig begun in 1873, found nearly a dozen new caves, saved the park after a rockfall in 2003, and the list goes on. Who knows what the next ten years will bring? The project is still alive and well. Come on down!

The dig in Fountain Cave continues (one more rock to go!), and we have also started a new survey of Fountain. October will be the last survey trip of the year due to the winter closure for (very few) bats, but surveyors and sketchers will be needed en masse come spring. We can

do survey training over the winter, and we will turn our focus again to historic signature research, etc. over the winter.

Virginia Cave Board – Meredith Hall Weberg

The Cave & Karst Trail web site will be live by the end of the year. It will include show caves & karst features. Sign will be installed in the future. Some trails already exist. This project is aimed toward tourists.

The next meeting will be November 9th in Christiansburg.

I

Cave Conservancy of the Virginias -Dave Socky

Logo contest in progress

Funds available

Spring Survey Project - Joey Fagan

No report

Crystal Cave at Hupps Hill -

On October 5th CCBF will approve the agreement to manage the cave.

The meeting room in the big building cave be used

Need VAR support to make this successful

Front Royal Grotto will manage access

If this venture is profitable, funds will come back to the VAR

The museum is open four days a week. The cave is to be open on main events at the site.

It is hoped that the bus tours will return

School group tours are a possibility

The plan is to start slow and to cover expenses.

Blue Ridge moved to support the project with MAKC. New River seconded - motion passed

Youth Group Liaison – Joey Fagan

No report

Spring Host Report

Tri-State has not sent in a financial report from the Spring VAR because they are waiting on the bill from the NSS for insurance. Report will come after the account is closed

Host Report – VPI

115 VAR attendees & 70 YTR attendees

Broke even

Thanks for support from Mary Sue Socky, Jim McConkey & Carol Tiderman

Old Business

VAR Hosts

Spring 2014 – RASS in May after caves open

Fall 2014 - Mon Grotto 50th Anniversary - at the Rich Mtn Battlefield in early October

Spring 2015 - no offers

WNS

fungus name has been changed

New Business

RASS moved that the Virginia Region requests those grottoes hosting future spring and fall VAR's to price registration so that members of the NSS pay at least five dollars less than non-members of the NSS. BATS seconded - motion failed

Grant Requests

None received

Elections

New River moved to reelect the current slate. Mon Grotto seconded- motion passed

Announcements

Oct 14th the Natural Bridge & Cave are going to auction

RASS & Blue Ridge Grotto will remove the tree of Porter's Gate on Oct. 26th

Alex Sproul is in the hospital - rods were put in his femur & he has 3 or 4 fractures in his wrist. He is expected to spend a week in the hospital & a week in rehab. He is in the Augusta Hospital in Fishersville

Adjournment

BATS moved to adjourn, Dingo's seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 10:09 AM

Respectfully submitted:

Carol Tideman